

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: KIM YONG SAM PRESS CONFERENCE

REF SEOUL 7590

SUMMARY: NDP PRESIDENT KIM YONG-SAM HELD PRESS CONFERENCE
NOV 14 TO ANNOUNCE PARTY DECISION TO CAMPAIGN FOR
CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION OUTSIDE ASSEMBLY. AS EXPECTED
KIM ALSO OUTLINED NDP DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND COMMENTED ON
PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT. OPPOSITION MAY STAGE
MARCH FROM ASSEMBLY NOV 15. END SUMMARY.

1. NOV 13 MEETING BETWEEN OPPOSITION AND GOVERNMENT
PARTIES AND SPEAKER CHONG IL-KWON FAILED TO RESOLVE
CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE IMPASSE. NDP POLITICAL
AFFAIRS COUNCIL EVENING SAME DAY DAY DECIDED TO REJECT
SPEAKER'S PROPOSAL AND CONTINUE ASSEMBLY BOYCOTT.

2. IN NOV 14 PRESS CONFERENCE KIM REITERATED NOW STANDARD
NDP POSITION THAT CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE ONLY SOLUTION
FOR ROK PROBLEMS. SINCE OPPOSITION EFFORTS IN ASSEMBLY
HAVE BEEN THWARTED BY GOVT. KIM ANNOUNCED THAT NDP WOULD
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SPEARHEAD EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY DRIVE BY KOREAN

PEOPLE TO AMEND CONSTITUTION USING "ALL METHODS" AND REGARDLESS OF "ALL POSSIBLE SACRIFICES." HE SAID BUDGET DEBATE BOYCOTT WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL GOVT CHANGED ATTITUDE.

3. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS QUESTIONS KIM ANNOUNCED THAT CAMPAIGN WOULD BEGIN IMMEDIATELY, BUT HE REFUSED TO OUTLINE SPECIFIC NDP PROGRAM. NDP SPOKESMAN YI TAEK-TON, HOWEVER, HAS TOLD US THAT NDP ASSEMBLYMEN PLAN MARCH FROM ASSEMBLY BUILDING TO NDP HEADQUARTERS FOLLOWING PARTY CAUCUS MORNING NOV 15.

4. IN FIRST PUBLIC STATEMENT OF NDP POSITION ON VISIT OF PRESIDENT FORD, KIM SAID THAT, IN PRINCIPLE, NDP NOT OPPOSED TO VISIT WHICH IT VIEWS AS "REAFFIRMATION TRADITIONAL FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KOREAN AND AMERICAN PEOPLE, BUT NOT AS EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR PARK REGIME." KIM ALSO WARNED THAT VISIT SHOULD NOT BE USED TO OBSCURE THE INFRINGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY ROKG.

5. NDP PROPOSED CONSTITUTION OUTLINED BY KIM CONTAINED NO SURPRISES: IT WOULD REDUCE POWER OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND INCREASE THAT OF LEGISLATIVE; IT ALSO CALLS FOR DIRECT POPULAR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WITH MAXIMUM TWO TERMS FOUR YEARS EACH, AND INCREASES AUTONOMY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

6. ON SUBJECT NATIONAL DEFENSE KIM CATEGORIZED US-ROK RELATIONSHIP AS "BACKBONE" ROK SECURITY WHICH MUST BE MAINTAINED. KIM CHARGED, AS HE HAS IN PAST, THAT DOMESTIC EXCESSES BY PRESIDENT PARK JEOPARDIZE US-ROK SECURITY TIES AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE BY ALIENATING US PUBLIC OPINION AND CONGRESS.

7. DRP SPOKESMAN HAS CRITICIZED KIM'S REMARKS CALLING NDP THREAT OF ACTION OUTSIDE ASSEMBLY "PETTY HEROISM." SPOKESMAN ATTACKED KIM FOR "FLUNKYISM," I.E. FOR PLAYING UP ROLE U.S. PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL OPINION ON ROK INTERNAL AFFAIRS. DRP HAS ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT IT PLANS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROCEED UNILATERALLY WITH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUDGET DEBATE DESPITE NDP BOYCOTT.

8. MEDIA COVERAGE OF PRESS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE. IN FIRST EDITORIAL REACTION LEADING TONGA ILBO URGED THE ASSEMBLY TO FORM THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT COMMITTEE IMMEDIATELY SINCE THIS IS ISSUE OF NATIONAL INTEREST. TONG EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER

UNILATERAL GOVERNMENT EXAMINATION BUDGET AND ASKED
NDP NOT TO ABANDON PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM SINCE OUTSIDE
ACTIVITIES LIMITED BY LAW.
SNEIDER

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